UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1801
3 January 1995

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General says all United Nations personnel should take pride in their accomplishments and in progress made by Organization in 1994.

+ Secretary-General welcomes signing of cease-fire agreement by Bosnian parties as first step towards real peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

+ UNPROFOR issues strong protest after Croatian Serb soldiers injure two Canadian peace-keepers in unprovoked attack.

+ Botswana, Germany, Honduras, Indonesia and Italy begin two-year terms of office as non-permanent members of Security Council.

+ DPI publishes 1993 United Nations Yearbook.

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All those who serve the United Nations are entitled to take pride in their accomplishments and in the progress made by the Organization in 1994, according to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. In his New Year's message to United Nations personnel, he said peace and development required not only far-seeing policies and adequate resources, but the services of dedicated professionals who were on the job day after day.

The Secretary-General expressed his admiration for United Nations peace-keepers, aid workers and staff members around the world. He stressed his determination to stand up for their needs and to spread the word of the indispensable work they were doing.

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The Secretary-General has said he is extremely pleased with the cease-fire agreement signed by the parties in Sarajevo on 31 December. He described the four-month agreement as an important first step towards a real peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and expressed hope that it would clear the way for the parties to return to the negotiating table in the near future.

The Secretary-General congratulated Special Representative Yasushi Akashi, Lieutenant-General Sir Michael Rose, and the entire United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) team for successfully brokering the cease-fire between the parties. A United Nations spokesman today said that Mr. Boutros-Ghali and Mr. Akashi had been in touch with the members of the Contact Group -- France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States -- with a view to building on the agreement.

The spokesman went on to say that the cease-fire seemed to be holding well, although the situation in Bihac was "fragile". However, he added that the Croatian Serbs had given clearance for a convoy to carry fuel to Bangladeshi peace-keepers in the enclave tomorrow.

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Two Canadian peace-keepers were seriously injured in a totally unprovoked attack in Croatia on Saturday, according to a United Nations spokesman. The Canadians were travelling in a vehicle through the town of Kolarina, in sector south, when they were fired on by a group of around 20 Croatian Serbs.

The spokesman said UNPROFOR had issued a very strong protest to the Croatian Serb leadership, calling for the arrest and court-martial of the soldiers responsible for the attack.

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The Security Council has five new non-permanent members this year: Botswana, Germany, Honduras, Indonesia and Italy. They were elected to two-year terms of office by the General Assembly last October, and replaced Brazil, Djibouti, New Zealand, Pakistan and Spain on 31 December.

The other non-permanent Council members are: Argentina, the Czech Republic, Nigeria, Oman and Rwanda. Their terms of office will end on 31 December 1995. China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States are permanent members of the Council.

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The Department of Public Information has published the forty-seventh volume of the Yearbook of the United Nations, covering the activities of the United Nations system in 1993. The Yearbook is the most comprehensive and authoritative publication on the work of the Organization, and is designed not just for use by diplomats, government officials and scholars, but also by writers, journalists, teachers and students.

The Yearbook consists of 54 chapters divided into six parts: political and security questions; regional questions; economic and social questions; legal questions; administrative and budgetary questions; and intergovernmental organizations related to the United Nations. It contains detailed information on meetings and activities of United Nations bodies, as well as most resolutions in their entirety.

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UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1802
4 January 1995

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General receives Letter of Peace from representatives of UNESCO, Universitas Albertiana and Ambito Maria Corral; will brief Security Council on peace-keeping, and give press conference, tomorrow.

+ Cease-fire continues to hold in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with exception of Bihac area; Abdic forces block fuel convoy bound for Bangladeshi peace-keepers.

+ United Nations aid team stands by in Moscow, pending approval for travel to Chechen Republic.

+ France, Italy, Malaysia, Pakistan and United States offer naval support for withdrawal of UNOSOM II peace-keepers from Somalia.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali was today presented with a "Letter of Peace" by representatives of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Universitas Albertiana and the Ambito Maria Corral, an organization dedicated to promoting intercultural understanding. The Letter espouses tolerance and universal respect for human rights and offers a set of principles on which to build enduring peace. It has so far been signed by eminent personalities from more than 30 countries, including several winners of the Nobel Peace Prize.

Tomorrow morning, the Secretary-General will brief the Security Council on his position paper on peace-keeping -- an update to his 1992 report "An Agenda for Peace". He will then hold a press conference at noon.

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The cease-fire which came into effect in Bosnia and Herzegovina on 1 January continued to hold well today, with the exception of the Bihac area, according to a United Nations spokesman. There was heavy shelling around Velika Kladusa yesterday, and fighting between Bosnian Serb and Bosnian Government forces around Bosanska Krupa.

For information media—not an official record

The process of delineating cease-fire lines has already begun, and could be completed within the next two weeks, the spokesman continued. Negotiations are currently underway within the regional cease-fire commissions, and meetings were held yesterday in Bihac and Gorazde. Meanwhile, a fuel convoy bound for the Bangladeshi peace-keepers in Bihac passed through territory controlled by the Croatian Serbs today, but was blocked in Velika Kladusa by forces loyal to rebel leader Fikret Abdic.

The spokesman noted that there would be a meeting of troop contributors at Headquarters tomorrow, as additional troops might be needed to implement the cease-fire agreement. The United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) has an authorized strength of 45,000 troops, but only has 38,500 deployed at present.

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A United Nations aid team is currently waiting for a "green light" to travel to the Chechen Republic, according to a spokesman for the Organization. International staff of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) are standing by in Moscow, and expect to receive visas for travel to the area tomorrow.

The spokesman recalled that the Secretary-General had last week approved a Russian request for assistance in dealing with internally displaced persons in the Chechen Republic. The UNHCR has been in touch with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) regarding the estimates of the number of people in need of humanitarian relief. The ICRC already has three logistical bases for relief supplies around Grozny.

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Five countries -- France, Italy, Malaysia, Pakistan and the United States -- have offered naval support for the withdrawal of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II), a spokesman for the Organization announced today. He anticipated that the remaining 8,000 peace-keepers would have left the country by mid-March.

The spokesman noted that the Secretary-General's Special Representative, James Victor Gbeho, would stay on in Somalia to continue his efforts to promote national reconciliation. The Special Representative is currently in Nairobi for a meeting of the Intergovernmental Agency for Drought and Development (IGAD).

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UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1803
5 January 1995

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General presents position paper on peace-keeping to Security Council; says international action must extend into reconstruction, rehabilitation and reestablishment of government; calls for deeper commitment to cooperation and true multilateralism in tackling root causes of conflict.

+ United States says Secretary-General's position paper reflects careful preparation and contains very valuable analysis and statistics; United Nations must make constant adjustments to demands of peace-keeping.

+ United Nations University and International Peace Academy to host Symposium on New Dimensions of Peace-Keeping Operations in Tokyo on 19 and 20 January.

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If conflicts between and within States are to be controlled and resolved, international action must extend beyond traditional peace-keeping into reconstruction, rehabilitation and the reestablishment of effective government, according to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. He said such action should not only address the immediate causes of conflicts, but also their root causes, which often lay in the absence of economic opportunities and in social inequities. The Secretary-General also called for a deeper commitment to cooperation and true multilateralism. He made those comments in a position paper on peace-keeping -- a supplement to his 1992 report "An Agenda for Peace" -- which he presented to the Security Council today. He later gave a press conference on the subject at Headquarters.

In his position paper, the Secretary-General highlighted the importance of preventive diplomacy and peacemaking. He noted that Member States collectively encouraged him to play an active role in that field, but were individually reluctant to do so when they were involved in a conflict. The solution might lie in creating a climate of opinion in which the norm would be for States to accept an offer of United Nations good offices, or for them to invite such an offer. He called attention to the problems of finding senior persons with the diplomatic skills to serve as Special Representatives or

Special Envoys, and of establishing and financing small missions for preventive diplomacy and peacemaking. A contingency provision for such activities might be included in the regular budget, while the existing provision for unforeseen and extraordinary activities might be enlarged for dealing with internal conflicts, as well as international ones.

Peace-keeping operations should not be given enforcement tasks, the Secretary-General stressed. "Nothing is more dangerous for a peace-keeping operation than to require it to use force when its existing composition, armament, logistic support and deployment deny it the capacity to do so", he said. The Security Council could entrust enforcement tasks to groups of Member States, thus providing the United Nations with a capacity it would otherwise lack. However, such a response could have a negative impact on the Organization's stature and credibility. There was also a danger that States involved might claim approval for actions not envisaged by the Council.

The Secretary-General underlined the need for unity of command of peace-keeping operations. Troop-contributing Governments should not provide guidance, let alone give orders, on operational matters. He said that the availability of troops and equipment had palpably declined, and that the United Nations should seriously consider the creation of a rapid reaction force. He told correspondents that the Organization had today signed an agreement with Jordan, by which that country would make troops available for such a force. He also suggested that the Council establish the availability of the necessary troops and equipment before creating new operations or giving new tasks to existing ones.

The Secretary-General began his press conference by saying that the United Nations was going through the most significant phase in its history. It had learned hard lessons from its experiences in recent years, and must now apply those lessons. If Member States were prepared to act on the suggestions in his position paper -- which had been received very favourably in the Security Council -- United Nations peace-keeping would be much more effective. That would enable the Organization to concentrate on the broader mission of development. He went on to say that if the United Nations asked more from its Member States, they had a right to expect more from it.

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The Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations, Madeleine Albright, today said that the Secretary-General's position paper on peace-keeping had been carefully prepared, and that it contained very valuable analysis and statistics. She told correspondents at Headquarters that it was "absolutely an appropriate role" for the Secretary-General to make such a report. However, she added that the issue of micro-management of the Security Council and the whole question of responsibilities and relationships required further discussion.

Ambassador Albright said that "peace-keeping, peacemaking and peace-building is clearly a work in progress, and one in which the United Nations has to make constant adjustments". The Secretary-General's paper would be the basis of a dialogue in the United Nations and in the United States, she added.

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The United Nations University and the International Peace Academy will host a Symposium on New Dimensions of United Nations Peace-Keeping Operations in Tokyo on 19 and 20 January. The Symposium is being organized with the support of the Japanese Foreign Ministry. Key speakers will include Yasushi Akashi, Special Representative for the former Yugoslavia; Hisashi Owada, Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations; Marrack Goulding, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs; and Sir Brian Urquhart, former Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs. They will be joined by government leaders and academics from Japan and other countries, and by representatives of non-governmental organizations.

The Symposium will examine such dimensions of peace-keeping as the future role of the United Nations in preventing and resolving conflicts, and the potential contributions that Member States and non-State actors can make. Specific issues to be covered by different panels include preventive action, humanitarian emergencies in conflict situations, the use of force, post-conflict peace processes, and the role of Japan in future peace-keeping efforts.

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UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

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6 January 1995

F R I D A Y H I G H L I G H T S

+ Security Council welcomes agreements on cease-fire and cessation of hostilities in Bosnia and Herzegovina; calls on all forces to cease fighting around Bihac.

+ Secretary-General leaves New York to visit Nordic countries and Germany; will attend some meetings in Geneva.

+ United Nations and Jordan sign Memorandum of Understanding on Stand-by Arrangements for peace-keeping operations.

+ Security Council Sanctions Committees elect Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen for 1995.

+ Member States owe United Nations almost $1.8 billion as of 31 December; $480 million owed to regular budget and $1.3 billion to peace-keeping.

+ Special Representative Khan to attend seven-nation summit on Rwanda refugee problem in Nairobi tomorrow.

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The Security Council today welcomed the agreements on a cease-fire and on a complete cessation of hostilities in Bosnia and Herzegovina concluded by the Bosnian parties on 23 and 31 December respectively. In a statement read out by its President, Emilio J. Cardenas (Argentina), the Council stressed the importance of immediate and full compliance with the agreements. It called on all forces to cease fighting around Bihac.

The Council said it attached the highest priority to the timely completion of the various steps envisaged in the agreement on a complete cessation of hostilities. It looked to all concerned to cooperate fully with the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in their implementation. It also expressed support for efforts underway to strengthen UNPROFOR, and encouraged Member States to make available the personnel and equipment needed for the Force to supervise and monitor the agreements.

For information media—not an official record

The Council deemed it imperative to intensify efforts under the auspices of the Contact Group to achieve an overall settlement on the basis of the acceptance of the Group's peace plan. It added that it would give its full support to such efforts.

Meanwhile, the cease-fire continued to hold in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the exception of the Bihac area, according to a United Nations spokesman. However, the situation in the enclave had improved after several days of fighting. A convoy carrying desperately needed fuel and other supplies reached the Bangladeshi UNPROFOR battalion stationed there last night, after being held up for 48 hours.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali was scheduled to leave New York today for a visit to the Nordic countries and Germany, according to a United Nations spokesman. He was also expected to attend some meetings in Geneva, including talks on East Timor beginning on 9 January.

The spokesman said the main topics for discussion during the visit would be the World Summit for Social Development, to be held in Copenhagen in March, and peace-keeping. The Secretary-General hoped that his position paper on peace-keeping -- a supplement to his 1992 report "An Agenda for Peace" -- would stimulate debate in Member States, he added.

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The United Nations and the Government of Jordan yesterday signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Stand-by Arrangements for peace-keeping operations. The Organization was represented at the signing ceremony by the Under-Secretary-General for Peace-keeping Operations, Kofi Annan, while Jordan was represented by Ambassador Adnan Abu Odeh.

Under the Memorandum, Jordan will earmark military, civilian police, civilian specialists and services for United Nations peace-keeping operations. It is the first such Memorandum to be signed, following two years of preliminary contacts with interested Member States. Up to now, 34 States have committed themselves to making stand-by arrangements with the Organization.

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The Security Council's Sanctions Committees, which are composed of all members of the Council, have elected their respective Bureaus for 1995. The Chairman of the Committee established by resolution 661 (1990) concerning the situation between Iraq and Kuwait is Detlev Graf Zu Rantzau (Germany), with Botswana and the Czech Republic as Vice-Chairmen; the Chairman of the

(more)

Committee established pursuant to resolution 724 (1991) concerning Yugoslavia is Emilio J. Cardenas (Argentina), with Nigeria and Oman as Vice-Chairmen; and the Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 748 (1992) concerning Libya is Karel Kovanda (Czech Republic), with Germany and Oman as Vice-Chairmen.

The Chairman of the Sanctions Committee established pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia is Salim Bin Mohammed Al-Khussaiby (Oman), with Honduras and Rwanda as Vice-Chairmen; the Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 864 (1993) concerning the situation in Angola is M. Francesco Paolo Fulci (Italy), with Honduras and Indonesia as Vice-Chairmen; and the Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 918 (1994) concerning Rwanda is Nugroho Wisnumurti (Indonesia), with Botswana and Italy as Vice-Chairmen.

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As of 31 December, Member States owed the United Nations almost $1.8 billion, according to the latest update on the Organization's financial situation. Of that amount, $480 million was for assessments for the regular budget and some $1.3 billion was for peace-keeping operations. Regular budget assessments for 1995 were sent out to Member States on 1 January.

The Russian Federation -- the largest debtor -- owed $507 million to the peace-keeping budget. The United States owed the United Nations a total of $469 million.

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The Secretary-General's Special Representative for Rwanda, Shahryar Khan, will attend a seven-nation summit on the country's refugee problem in Nairobi tomorrow, according to a United Nations spokesman. The summit will seek to work out the concept of security zones for the return of refugees.

The nations participating in the summit will be Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Zaire and Zambia. The United Nations, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) will be present as observers.

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UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

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DH/1805
9 January 1995

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General, in Geneva, holds talks on East Timor with Foreign Ministers of Portugal and Indonesia; parties agree to continue efforts to seek just and comprehensive settlement.

+ Secretary-General says Security Council should extend UNOMIL mandate for three months; urges Liberian parties to implement Accra Agreement and observe cease-fire.

+ Georgian/Abkhaz political process is at standstill, Secretary-General reports; recommends three-month extension of UNOMIG mandate.

+ United Nations says it began and ended 1994 with 17 active peace-keeping operations around world.

+ Malaysian peace-keepers leave Somalia; French frigate arrives off coast to help cover final withdrawal of UNOSOM II.

+ UNHCR team arrives in North Ossetia to begin assessing Chechen refugee situation.

+ Family planning can save children's lives and benefit health of mothers, United Nations study shows.

+ World Commission on Culture and Development to meet in Muscat from 10 to 12 January.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali was in Geneva today, where he held a fifth round of meetings on East Timor with the Foreign Ministers of Portugal and Indonesia, according to a United Nations spokesman. Discussions focused on the Secretary-General's initiative to facilitate the convening of an all-inclusive intra-East Timorese dialogue, on a set of issues to be addressed in future talks, and on confidence-building measures.

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For information media—not an official record

The parties agreed to continue their efforts, with the assistance of the Secretary-General, to find a just, comprehensive and internationally acceptable settlement to the question of East Timor. The sixth round of talks will be held in New York on 19 May.

The Secretary-General will leave Geneva tomorrow for Finland, the spokesman said. He will also visit Sweden, Denmark and Germany during his current trip.

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The Secretary-General has recommended that the Security Council extend the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) for three months to 13 April. In a report dated 6 January, he said the Liberian parties would be expected to respect the Accra Agreement of 21 December and the cease-fire which was implemented a week later. However, he noted that the parties had signed and broken many peace agreements in the past. In the light of that experience, the international community had reason to be skeptical about embracing the current Agreement before they had demonstrated their readiness to honour it.

Over the next three months, the Special Representative for Liberia would conduct an in-depth assessment of the role the United Nations military observers could play in support of the peace process, the Secretary-General continued. He would also make recommendations on any adjustments in UNOMIL's strength that might be required if the parties were willing to implement the Accra Agreement.

The Secretary-General stressed that all Liberians must ensure that the Agreement and the timetable laid out for its implementation were strictly adhered to. He warned the Liberian factions that without their full commitment to that process, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the international community could not continue to assist them in the search for peace.

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The Georgian/Abkhaz political process is at a standstill, despite a year of negotiations towards a comprehensive settlement, according to the Secretary-General. In a report to the Security Council dated 6 January, he said the core question of the conflict -- the identification of a political status for Abkhazia acceptable to both sides -- remained far from being resolved.

Given the intensity and proximity of the crisis in the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation, it was likely that political efforts to address the Abkhazia issue would remain in suspense for the time being, he continued. However, he stressed that in the longer term, the issue could only be resolved through negotiations between the two sides. Meanwhile, the situation prevented a resolution of the humanitarian problems of refugees and displaced persons, and failed to provide the basic elements of stability and security.

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The Secretary-General said that he remained willing to assist personally by meeting separately or jointly with the leaders of the two sides, and that his Special Envoy was also ready to continue his mediating role. He recommended that the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) be extended until 15 May, at which time the mandate of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) peace-keeping force would end.

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Last year began and ended with 17 active United Nations peace-keeping operations around the world, a spokesman for the Organization said today. The total reached 18 in May and June, with the creation of the brief but successful Libya-Chad mission. The United Nations Observer Mission Uganda-Rwanda (UNOMUR) was phased out in September, but the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) was established in December.

The number of peace-keeping operations will fall over the next four months as the United Nations Operation in Mozambique (UNOMOZ), the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) and the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL) are closed down, the spokesman continued. Troop strength remained at around 70,000 through 1994, while the number of troop-contributors rose from 70 to 76.

* * *

Malaysia has withdrawn its battalion from the mission area of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II), leaving some 8,000 peace-keepers in the country, a spokesman for the Organization said today. He noted that a French frigate had taken up position off the Somali coast as the first part of a multinational force covering the final phases of UNOSOM II's withdrawal. Italy, Malaysia, Pakistan and the United States will also contribute naval units to the force.

Meanwhile, the World Food Programme (WFP) has announced that it will supply an additional 80,000 metric tons of food to Somalia in 1995. The Programme noted that the country would face a wide range of problems this year, including the return and resettlement of some 400,000 refugees and 280,000 internally displaced persons, and the demobilization and reintegration of former militiamen.

* * *

A United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) mission has arrived in North Ossetia to begin assessing the Chechen refugee situation, a spokesman for the Organization said today. Meanwhile, two aircraft loaded with relief supplies are ready to fly to the area from the Netherlands and Turkey.

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The spokesman noted that the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) will be dealing with an estimated 200,000 internally displaced persons in the Chechen Republic. The UNHCR will be responsible for some 100,000 to 125,000 refugees in two neighbouring republics.

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With final preparations for the World Summit for Social Development under way, the United Nations will host a seminar from 11 to 13 January to debate the challenges posed by global free market reforms. It will be attended by more than 150 scholars, United Nations and government officials and representatives of non-governmental organizations.

The seminar on economic restructuring and social policy will deal with some of the most contentious issues to be faced by the World Summit, which will be held in Copenhagen in March. The seminar is being organized by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and is co-sponsored by the European Centre for Social Welfare and Policy Research.

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Family planning can save children's lives and benefit the health of mothers, according to a new United Nations study. Entitled "The Health Rationale of Family Planning: Timing of Births and Child Survival", it was conducted by the Population Division of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis.

The study found that child survival could be improved through delaying child-bearing at least to age 18 and possibly to age 20, and more especially through achieving birth intervals of at least two years. The study -- the most wide ranging to date on the topic -- encompassed over 280,000 births and nearly 35,000 deaths before age five in 25 countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia.

* * *

The World Commission on Culture and Development will focus on the Arab region at a meeting in Muscat, Oman, from 10 to 12 January. Held under the auspices of the Omani Ministry of National Heritage and Culture, the meeting will bring together decision makers, scholars and experts to discuss culture and development and related regional concerns.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nations jointly established the World Commission in 1992. Since then, it has been holding hearings throughout the world to prepare the World Report on Culture and Development. The policy-oriented report will contain recommendations designed to ensure that the cultural dimension is included in all economic and social development plans.

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UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

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DH/1806
10 January 1995

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General begins first official visit to Finland, following meetings with Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters, UNHCR and High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva.

+ Senior United Nations official to consult with Tajik opposition leaders in Teheran from 12 to 14 January, in preparation for upcoming inter-Tajik talks.

+ African leaders express support for International Tribunal for Rwanda at Nairobi summit; back creation of transit camps to absorb Rwandese refugees returning from neighbouring countries.

+ Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for Elaboration of International Convention to Combat Desertification begins two-week session at Headquarters.

+ International staff and United Nations volunteers working at UNOSOM II headquarters to be moved to Mogadishu airport.

+ WFP and Catholic Relief Services sign working agreement on collaboration in emergency and long-term relief operations.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today arrived in Helsinki on his first official visit to Finland, according to a United Nations spokesman. Before leaving Geneva, the Secretary-General met with the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters and discussed the chapter on disarmament in his recent position paper on peace-keeping. He also met with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Sadako Ogata to discuss the situation in Rwandese refugee camps. A meeting with United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights José Ayala Lasso focused on the situations in Rwanda, Colombia and Guatemala.

Tomorrow, the Secretary-General will have a range of meetings with senior Finnish Government officials, the spokesman said. He will also speak at the

For information media—not an official record

opening ceremony of the Conference of Nordic Countries in the United Nations for Peace and Development.

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A United Nations spokesman today announced that Raymond Sommereyns, Director in the Department of Political Affairs, would visit Teheran from 12 to 14 January for consultations with Tajik opposition leaders. The visit is a follow-up to the consultations undertaken by Special Envoy Ramiro Piriz-Ballon with President Emomali Rakhmonov and Tajik government officials in Dushanbe in late December. It is intended to prepare for the fourth round of inter-Tajik talks, to be held in Moscow later this month.

In that connection, the United Nations has appealed to all parties to abide by their commitments under the agreement on the cessation of hostilities which was concluded in Teheran last year. The agreement, and the mandate of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT), will expire on 6 February. The spokesman stressed the importance of the inter-Tajik talks, saying they would have a bearing on the Secretary-General's upcoming report on UNMOT.

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The Secretary-General's Special Representative for Rwanda, Shahryar Khan, yesterday returned to Kigali after attending a seven-nation summit on the country's refugee problem in Nairobi, according to a United Nations spokesman. The summit was attended by the Heads of State of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia, and by the Prime Minister of Zaire. The United Nations, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) were also present as observers.

The African leaders expressed support for the International Tribunal for Rwanda, and for the creation of transit camps to gradually absorb refugees returning from neighbouring countries, the spokesman continued. After returning to Kigali, Special Representative Khan had meetings with Rwanda's leaders to discuss the follow-up to the summit.

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The Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for the Elaboration of an International Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa yesterday began a two-week session at Headquarters. The Committee adopted its agenda and the programme of work for the first week.

In his opening statement, Committee Chairman Bo Kjellen (Sweden) said the Convention would only be effective if it were well publicized, particularly in the drylands. The general public must be made aware that the dryland issue was of global significance and that the Convention was a major part of the process set in motion by the 1992 Earth Summit, he added.

(more)

A Secretariat official informed the Committee that 95 countries and the European Union had signed the Convention, with South Africa becoming the ninety-sixth signatory yesterday.

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Some 350 international staff and volunteers working at the headquarters of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) are to be moved to Mogadishu airport by the weekend, a spokesman for the Organization announced today. He stressed that the embassy compound housing the headquarters was not being evacuated. UNOSOM II currently has more than 8,000 troops in Somalia, including a 950-strong security battalion at the compound.

Meanwhile, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has issued more than 8,000 doses of vaccine to health facilities in north-eastern districts in Somalia, the spokesman said. The Fund also delivered 2,500 textbooks and other educational materials to a primary school in the north-east.

* * *

The World Food Programme (WFP) and the Catholic Relief Services today signed a formal working agreement covering joint collaboration in emergency and long-term relief operations. This is the first time the WFP has entered into a formal working agreement with an international non-governmental organization.

The agreement aims to strengthen the provision of immediate food assistance and to promote socio-economic self-reliance among beneficiaries. It was signed by WFP Executive Director Catherine Bertini and Catholic Relief Services Executive Director Kenneth Hackett at the latter's headquarters in Baltimore, Maryland.

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UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

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DH/1807
11 January 1995

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General, in Helsinki, has meetings with Finnish President and Prime Minister; expresses gratitude for Finland's contribution to United Nations work for peace and development.

+ In address to Nordic Conference, Secretary-General says Member States must learn to use United Nations to handle new forms of conflict so they can properly address imperative of development.

+ Multinational Force says security situation in Haiti is positive; notes continued progress in establishment of Haitian Interim Public Security Force and deployment of international police monitors around country.

+ Bosnian parties meet at Sarajevo airport to discuss implementation details of cessation of hostilities agreement; Co-Chairmen of International Conference on Former Yugoslavia meet with Croatian parties at Pleso.

+ United Nations to launch two major fund-raising drives for Rwanda in Geneva next week.

+ Liberian parties meet in Accra to choose composition of new Council of State; UNOMIL reports cease-fire holding throughout Liberia.

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Continuing his official visit to Finland, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today met with President Martti Ahtisaari at the Presidential Palace in Helsinki. The Secretary-General expressed gratitude for Finland's outstanding contribution to the work of the United Nations in the areas of peace and development. President Ahtisaari said his country would continue to provide strong support for the Organization's programmes and activities. Among the issues they discussed were the need to institutionally strengthen peace-keeping operations, the work of regional organizations, and United Nations operations in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda.

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For information media—not an official record

The Secretary-General then attended a luncheon hosted in his honour by President Ahtisaari. The guests included the Prime Minister of Finland, Esko Aho, the Prime Minister of Iceland, David Oddsson, and the Prime Minister of Norway, Gro Harlem Brundtland. He later had a meeting with Prime Minister Aho.

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Member States must learn to use the United Nations to handle new forms of conflict, so that they and the Organization can properly address the issue of development, according to the Secretary-General. He made that comment in Helsinki today, in an address to the Nordic Countries Conference on "The Nordic Countries in the United Nations -- For Peace and Development".

The Secretary-General described development as "the primary imperative of our time", but said the United Nations was forced to focus on peace-keeping because of a distorted world picture. He went on to deal with six major instruments that the United Nations had developed over the last fifty years: preventive diplomacy and peacemaking, peace-keeping, peace-building, disarmament, sanctions, and peace enforcement. Those instruments were discussed at length in his recent position paper on peace-keeping -- a supplement to the "Agenda for Peace".

The Nordic Countries Conference is due to adopt a declaration tomorrow on the future of the United Nations. The declaration will then be considered by the Nordic Council and communicated to the Secretary-General.

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The security situation in Haiti is positive, and there has been continued progress in the establishment of the Haitian Interim Public Security Force, according to the latest report of the Multinational Force. Covering the period from 19 December to 9 January, it was transmitted by the United States to the President of the Security Council in a letter dated 9 January. The report said the Multinational Force had been focusing on developing the Haitian security system and establishing conditions for the transition to the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH).

International police monitors have been deployed to ten locations around Haiti, while the Interim Public Security Force has a presence in 25 locations outside Port-au-Prince, according to the report. Those deployments, combined with the continued presence of Caribbean Community (CARICOM) forces in Cap Haitien and the addition of contracted security personnel in the capital, have allowed the continued drawdown of Multinational Force levels.

However, there was a violent incident at the headquarters of the Forces armées d'Haiti on 26 December, the report noted. The violence erupted spontaneously after poor communications led Haitian soldiers to believe they would lose their jobs and pay. A Multinational Force unit moved immediately to the headquarters and engaged armed soldiers, killing three and wounding six. There were no Multinational Force casualties and the situation was calm in the following days.

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Military leaders of the Bosnian sides met today at Sarajevo airport to discuss implementation details of the current cessation of hostilities agreement, according to a United Nations spokesman. The third meeting of the so-called Central Joint Commission established under the agreement was chaired by the Commander of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina and by the senior UNPROFOR civil affairs official in Sarajevo.

The spokesman expressed hope that today's meeting would lead to the reopening of the Sarajevo airport routes within days. Humanitarian flights into the city resumed this afternoon after being closed this morning due to bad weather. He added that the cease-fire continued to be observed in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Meanwhile, the Co-Chairmen of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, Thorvald Stoltenberg and Lord Owen, met with Croatian Government and Croation Serb representatives at Pleso. Agreement was reached on certain provisions for further implementation of the Economic Agreement signed by the parties last month. The Joint Commission will meet in Knin on 27 January and in Split on 24 February.

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The United Nations system will soon launch two major fund-raising drives for Rwanda in Geneva, a spokesman for the Organization announced today. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) will hold a round-table on reconstruction and rehabilitation on 18 and 19 January. A consolidated inter-agency appeal will also be launched next week. The drives will each have goals of more than $700 million for short- and medium-term assistance to Rwanda.

Meanwhile, the Government in Kigali has given the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) permission to launch a radio station. The station will become operational as soon as certain technical details have been worked out.

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The Secretary-General's Special Representative for Liberia, Anthony Nyakyi, today attended a meeting of the Liberian parties in Accra, Ghana, a United Nations spokesman said. The meeting was convened to choose the composition of the Council of State agreed to by the parties last month. It was hosted by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

The spokesman went on to say that the Council of State could be installed by the end of the week. Meanwhile, the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) reported that the cease-fire was generally holding throughout Liberia and that the situation was calm.

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